

## Hebrews (Part Six): God's Salvation Communication

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I want you to turn to Hebrews chapter 1. I am going to do something that as far as I know this is the first time since I began preaching back in the early 60s that I ever did this particular thing. I am going to read the whole chapter to you.

**Hebrews 1:1-14** God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who in the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself, purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, today I have begotten you?" And again: "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son"? But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him." And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire." But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions." And: "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail." But to which of the angels has He ever said:

"Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool"?  
Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those  
who will inherit salvation?

I read this entire chapter to you in order to punctuate its importance to our lives, hopefully for all eternity. Punctuation is normally only thought of and used in grammar as a means of separating one thought or category from another. Punctuation is used to add or subtract emphasis within a subject. In the Bible, John 1:1-18 and Hebrews 1:1-14 are very significant entire chapters that punctuate the importance of Jesus Christ to salvation. Jesus seriously meant it when He declared to us in John 15:5 that "Without Me you can do nothing"! Burn that into your mind. We must never allow yet that to slip from our mind.

This one we just read of in Hebrews we must always remember, never forgetting that He is the Potter. We are the clay. He showed himself in John 15 as being a branch. And the fruit that was produced at the end of the branch would never be there if it was not attached to the branch. That is the illustration that He is making. That He is that important to real life, that is, salvation life—If we are not attached to Him, if He is not there, if we do not see Him in our lives as our Creator, that He is the one who is doing the work, providing the means to do the work, whatever is needed He supplies to us. And for what reason? That we will produce fruit.

Now, do you understand what this verse is saying regarding His importance then to salvation? It is saying, we must learn to work with Him or we will not be in the Kingdom of God. We must produce a very specific fruit in our lives or that fruit will not match what God desires for us. And if we are not ready at the end of our period of trial, we will not be there. And the strength, the motivation, whatever is needed in order for that fruit to be produced, is going to come through our relationship with Jesus Christ. He is that important. Are you doing anything to make sure that that relationship exists and is growing stronger day by day because of our appreciation for Him and for yielding to what He wants to create in us?

These two chapters definitely, and yet with great emphasis, describe who He was, who He remained during His entire life, what His responsibility is to us now, and He will continue on pursuing when God's Kingdom is established

with Him as King. Our existence now, our growth, and our eternity is tied to His life and Him being a part of that life. It is He who gives us the creative guidance that we need in order to be prepared for the Kingdom of God. Now our relationship with Him most definitely must not be taken lightly as though, "Well, He's a nice person," but an unnecessary appendage we can use or dispense with as we please.

In the previous message, I concluded the very beginning of Hebrews' epistle, especially that first paragraph in which seven of Christ's personal achievements, appointments, assignments, and destinies are listed. The author of the epistle began in this manner, extolling them as reasons that *justified* Christ's appointment as our High Priest, though He was of the family of Judah, not Levi. His tribal roots was one of the concerning issues to those converting from the tribe of Judah.

Now why would they be concerned? Well, because that appointment was a departure from assignments made under the Old Covenant. The Jews had not made a complete adjustment to the reality of the New Covenant. The Levitical appointments had existed *unbroken* for a period of very close to 1,500 years under the Old Covenant. Also was the reality that though Christ was indeed the promised Messiah, the Jews had a tough time with the fact that He died a very human death. That they did not expect and it was hard for them to accept that. We are not faced with quite the same kind of challenge that they were. So, it was an important thing that the book of Hebrews get written so that this could be straightened out in their minds right at the very beginning of the church era. So they did not expect that the Messiah would die.

Now, the author of the epistle to the Hebrews shows very clearly throughout the book that Christ is well-qualified. Not merely well, but He is so far above everybody else, nobody else even matters for being given thoughtful consideration. He is uniquely qualified because He is God and He is the one with the major responsibilities for our salvation, which He *must* carry out. So He is not just sitting up there ruling, He is *actively working*. As He said in John 5:17, "My father works and I work." He is actively working, and what is He doing? He is working to save us.

Now, we have our part in this and that is that we must carry out our responsibility to keep in communication with Him and be obedient to Him. Never forget, brethren, one of His unique qualifications that He has for this job is that there has never been a time that He has not been God. Not even for one second, even as a human being. He was always God. Is there anybody even comes close to being our Savior? Is there anybody that comes close that can actually prepare us to be in the Kingdom of God? Not on your life.

His uniqueness comes through to meet the needs for those of us who will benefit from them. And so the author of the epistle to the Hebrews is telling the Jews that Jesus Christ can be relied upon, so rest assured, the conclusion is that the Father has placed the church in very good hands. Now that was a concern for them as the church was beginning following that day of Pentecost in 31 AD. And it kept building until finally it threatened to drive the church apart. And there in Acts 15 as we went through, they got that thing resolved and from that time on, then, the church began to grow successfully in the way that it needed to grow to be prepared for the Kingdom of God.

In that previous sermon, I then proceeded to give an overview of Christ's methods of preparing the apostles as workers under Him in the next stage of theirs' and now our responsibilities and we looked into Revelation 14:1-5 and I showed you five distinctly clear characteristics created into the 144,000. I think we need to be familiar with these because you can be very sure that Jesus is going to prepare the same work, to prepare the same qualities in us. Let me give you those characteristics once again.

Number one: The Father's name was written on the 144,000's foreheads.

Number two: They sang a song that others could not learn. Songs usually tell a story; that is, God's songs do anyway.

Number three: They were not defiled by any idolatry whatever. They were focused on God and His purpose.

Number four: They followed the Lamb wherever He led. There was no deviation from their loyalty to Him.

Number five: There was in them no deceit whatever.

These are going to be major goals for our preparation as well. Now turn with me to Luke the 24th chapter. This is at the end of Jesus' ministry and I just want to familiarize you with it.

**Luke 24:44-49** [Jesus is speaking to them one final time] Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. [That is what is going to happen to us as well. Jesus Christ is going to be responsible to open up the Scriptures to our understanding.] Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

I went to these scriptures because I want you to see that the same general pattern that Christ used to prepare the apostles is being followed for our development to serve under Him when God's Kingdom is established. The most obvious difference is that Christ was present with the apostles physically for the especially specific creative goals for their responsibilities that they needed. I did this so that we would understand that generally Christ is following the same pattern, and that this ensures that the key spiritual element required for us in this process in which He is teaching us and preparing us is *faith in Christ's leadership*. It is not just faith broadly, it is *faith in Christ's leadership*. We know the 144,000 learned the lesson because they follow Him wherever He goes. Are we going to deviate from what He wants us to be made into for *our* job in the Kingdom of God?

Now, you know from your time in the church and the lessons that you have heard preached from the sermons and so forth, that the apostles sometimes had a hard time accepting what He said, and doing what He said was not always easy for them, because they were carnal just as we are carnal. But they had to learn to get to the place where they accepted His word as absolute truth at all times. And we know they did because of what it says in the book of Revelation, that they are in that 144,000. But we have to learn that now.

Christ proceeded on this routine with the apostles for three and a one-half years on an almost daily basis as He traveled over the entire land of Israel preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God and His way of life from within the gospel, while they witnessed His actions and reactions in a multitude of situations. The content of what became the gospels, the other epistles, and the epistle to the Hebrews was learned by the apostles on the fly, as it were, in the midst of life as it was being practiced, in a literal, day-to-day, real life situation with their very Creator. That must have been something!

This is happening to us except that we do not have Him with us physically as He was with them. But He is with us spiritually and that is why I said that the primary spiritual ingredient, gift, or power that we need is going to be faith that will allow us to grow in love—first for Him and then others as well. But it begins with our faith in Him.

Now teaching of the apostles was done through a combination of formal sit-down sessions combined with living lessons as Jesus exemplified them by His life and as He verbally taught during the real times in those three and one-half years. As we know, at the end of this method of teaching, God in the flesh revealed a major extent of His love by giving Himself in death, sacrificing His life for the spiritual benefit of those following Him. Again, see ourselves in this picture. We are following Him. We do not have Him with us like they did. But nonetheless we are following Him and He sacrificed His life for our spiritual benefit as well.

Could any teacher possibly go farther than what He did? This is why John the 13th chapter and in verse 1 literally says in the Greek language, "That He loved them to the uttermost." That is, to the last and to the highest degree possible. And the twelve chosen at the beginning of His ministry then

proceeded to participate in the far more direct responsibility of teaching that same way of life they learned when they were following God in the flesh over the land of Israel.

It is right at this point that we collide head-on with a major difference between what I will call the old and the new teaching systems. The worship rules, outlining the way of life that we are now learning during the time of our calling, are most directly learned, motivated by faith, and practiced in life's day-by-day experiences. Now, are we not doing that? We are. It is through carrying out our daily responsibilities while, at one and the same time, a personal relationship exists between the Teacher and the students. This is *essential* to our growth. Now, this method's goals for life tend to be learned less systematically under this system because each student tends to be on different levels of abilities and aptitudes, and all levels are mixed in some classes. Look at what the motley group in here is like.

Unlike the book of Leviticus, which Christ gave to the people when He came the first time there, He did not do that with the book of Hebrews. He gave them an already written book for them to learn from. Instead, from knowledge that the Twelve were gathering as they followed Him about, those leaders He chose to teach His way were going to participate in organizing and writing a Book themselves far more extensive and profound than merely the epistle to the Hebrews. And that Book had its contents formed as Jesus personally taught them. However, Jesus' teaching continued on over a span of roughly 50 years as they were carefully groomed and overseen by Him for their responsibility. After His departure from earth He directed His teaching spiritually from His place in heaven and that is what He is doing now.

Now the book that they wrote is called today the New Testament. At this point it is helpful to remember that Leviticus had five full chapters with detailed instructions just on the sacrifices. But under the new government we learners, we disciples, are the living sacrifices and this system, brethren, makes all the difference in the world in terms of the quality of the product produced. Sacrificing ourselves is the key to growth. Sacrificing that self-centeredness that burns so strongly in our human will and produces the carnal reactions to so many things.

This method of instruction that we are involved in absolutely requires the disciple to make practical day-to-day use of his faith right on the battlefield, as it were, even as he is learning. But, and this "but" is very important, it functions well only when there is a faithful and loving spiritual relationship between the teacher—Christ—and the disciples, and Christ is a reality to the disciple. If He is not, why are you even here? And that teacher—Christ—is respected to such a sufficient degree that His students voluntarily give themselves over to His instruction and correction. There is nobody whipping us into line, brethren. We have to do it on our own (as we heard in the sermonette) in order to earn God's respect. He has the power to give us eternal life if He respects us, that we will indeed forever follow Jesus Christ wherever He goes.

This is not a method that works by rote as does much of Leviticus. It absolutely requires active participation and this is because our teacher—Christ—is aiming at a vital combination of understanding and character achievement from His students that otherwise could not be attained by the students. We have to throw ourselves into this relationship on the strength of faith. That is a little different. The apostles had Jesus right with them for that first three and one-half years. They had eye contact with Him, they actually saw Him doing His thing, as it were. We never see that until after it is over and we are born into the Family of God.

And so that is why I say, the key spiritual element for us begins with faith that will then grow into love. And so therefore the disciples—*us*—are being tested to prove our growth daily as He goes along our way with us, and by this manner the Book the apostles produced of four accounts focused on the life of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ, plus Acts, plus 21 epistles, and the book of Revelation. Twenty-seven separate writings in all authored by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, James, Jude, Paul, and perhaps, who knows, one more. None of these books existed as they watched and heard God in the flesh as He taught them earlier.

So what is achieved in the end by this method is a much higher level of already tried and tested way of life ingrained in the disciples' character. Now they were prepared to work under Him when His Kingdom is established.



I want to remind you of something I said previously in one of the introductory messages of this series. It is a vague general complaint by mankind against God that He does not communicate with mankind. Turn with me for just briefly to Ephesians 2.

**Ephesians 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.

Now that complaint from mankind that God does not communicate with human beings is nothing more than the passing of a buck of blame to One who is not guilty. What is left unsaid in their complaint is what they are really complaining about: being required to use their faith as a vital part as God requires. Now faith is required of us in this relationship in forms of belief and trust. This is in Jesus Christ, primarily. This complaint regarding lack of communication on God's part is a false accusation born out of mankind's carnality and disbelief. It is born out of a lack of effort to seek Him as He commands. Now, here is one of God's answers. Turn with me to the book of Luke in chapter 13. This is very brief and it is to the point.

**Luke 13:34-35** [Jesus is the speaker here] "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!" [Can you see where He is heading with this response? "What do you mean, I didn't communicate with you?" He nails them right to the wall.] See [He says]! Your house has left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

We are going to extrapolate on this a little bit, and I begin by saying this: If those people complaining are Israelites and very, very many of them are here in the United States, they are outright lying that God does not communicate. If people will just search God out and believe Him, they will see He was clearly and especially communicating with the Israelite people to which He dispatched prophets almost endlessly. Now the communication is available if

it is taken believingly. Are these people saying there is no Bible that they can understand, that they can access, and throw themselves into striving to understand it? The communication is available.

God's prophets have never come before the people with their own message. Rather, they have faithfully delivered God's message to those He communicated with. And interestingly, the verb in these verses here, 34 and 35, is written indicating continuousness. "I have communicated with You continuously," God says. Even prior to Abraham God clearly and directly communicated with Adam and Eve, Abel, Cain, Enoch, Noah, and who knows how many other unnamed persons. The Bible story clearly proceeds to show He clearly communicated with Abraham and then with Abraham's Israelitish descendants all the way down to this very day. From Moses to Malachi, God's revelations were recorded in written form as histories, psalms, proverbs, and prophecy. Many prophecies are tied in some way with the coming of the Messiah and with Israelitish history. Are those who complain about a lack of communication saying the Bible is not a means of communication?

But let us take notice of the reason the author begins as he does by stating Jesus' qualification as seen through the eyes of His contemporaries. Who were His contemporaries? They were the apostles. Let us go back to I Peter 1. I am giving you just a little bit of a touch of this to show you what they said.

**I Peter 1:10-12** Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them [that is, to the prophets] it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us [the apostles and those the apostles communicated with] they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

Right from the prophets to the apostles, through the books that they wrote to the people that God through Jesus Christ raised up, God has been

communicated to, especially, the Israelite people. So there was a continuous progression from one to another and that specific progression of prophets, apostles, teachers ends, though, abruptly when Christ is born. Now the unspoken lesson for us is that nothing needs to be added to the Messiah's message.

The majority of mankind worldwide has not even the faintest idea regarding the greatness of this Person I am speaking of here. Even in Israelitish nations, most people do not seriously think about Him very often, let alone pattern their lives after Him. And this is because they really do not believe what is said about Him or His message.

I want to go to another verse that I have hit on fairly often here lately, because I want you to see here right from God's own Word, what God's answer is to these complaints. You are very familiar with these scriptures.

**John 1:10-12** He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own [Meaning, most specifically, the Jewish people. But we will say Israelitish people in general.], and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.

This clearly shows the pattern of the way that mankind responds to Christ without the direct intervention of God in His calling of them, thus triggering our minds for acceptance of Him.

Now, if you believe that this is difficult to accept regarding humanity, that humanity just rejects Jesus Christ out of hand, just think for a moment how quickly Adam and Eve, our human forbearers, overlooked the deadly seriousness of His instruction before they sinned. Each of them turned what He set aside as if it meant nothing. That is the way the majority of people read the Bible. I do not like to say something like that, but that is the way it is. They did this on the basis, that is, Adam and Eve did, of a mere internal desire. And those desires they turned aside from God were more than mere whims. But even so those desires led them to commit what was essentially a suicide. "In the day that you eat thereof," God warned them, you are as good as dead.

It is hard to think of us nice human beings being this way, but we are. And my concern is that we will do the same thing to Jesus Christ as the world does. We cannot do that. We cannot let that happen. Did you hear me? *We cannot let that happen.* We have to work at it.

Today part of mankind's communication problem exists partly because of not having ever seen Him, combined with living in this world almost overwhelmed by man's inventiveness. He is to them, at best, a semi-mythological personality. We tend to look at Him now in a way that "we've seen it all." And what they hear about Him is partly muted by teaching that may not be entirely true. Let me go back to my first thought really: How important is the Christ to us really?

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews began in the manner he did for two reasons. Of all of Christ's qualifications, the first one that I am going to give is, I believe, the most important to each of us individually. So turn with me through the book of Hebrews.

**Hebrews 1:3** Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power [Here comes the one that I personally feel is the most important to us individually], when He had by Himself purged our sins, and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

"When He had by Himself purged our sins." Now sin, especially in this busy, fast-moving, and intense times that we are living in and through in this nation, is not taken any more seriously than Adam and Eve appear to have considered it a mortal danger to sin. Do not allow yourself ever to forget this reality! Sin kills! Now, Jesus, regardless of whom He was as a man—I want to remind you again to not forget this—He nonetheless remained God all the while He was in the flesh. This is very important in regard to sin.

**Hebrews 9:6-10** Now when these things have thus been prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing services. But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance; the Holy Spirit

indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered [I want you to especially focus in on what it is going to say here in the next verse] which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience—concerned only with food and drinks, and various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of the reformation.

You understand what that is saying? I mean this is really mind boggling! Unless God personally forgave sins under the Old Covenant, there was not one sin ever forgiven by the offerings at the tent and the Tabernacle and the Temple. They have no power to forgive sin. They have no power to cleanse a person's conscience. It was not until Jesus Christ died for our sins that it became possible for them to be forgiven because the payment was made. And that is why I say this is probably the single thing that is most important to us in terms of their relevance in setting up the situation in which we can be in the Kingdom of God.

Know this: that Jesus Christ and the Father never did forget what sin is. It still kills. And so we have to make every effort to be close to Jesus Christ, to be using the office that He now offers to us in the forgiveness and cleanses us from our sins. And He is able to see that we are making efforts on our part to sacrifice ourselves to make sure that the sins are overcome.

Now, there is one other reality that has to do with why the author of the epistle to the Hebrews began the way he did. The second reality is this: the author's purpose is to draw attention to the orderly progressive arrangement of what he authored in the epistle that shows that Christ is greater than all the prophets who proceeded Him, greater than the angels, greater than Moses, greater than Joshua, and greater than the Levitical priesthood. This one sentence is indeed, "when He by Himself purged our sins." This one sentence is indeed the keynote of the entire writing of this epistle in order to make clear that the source of all blessings between now and eternity flow from Him to us. There is no other way.

I just cannot stress that enough. It is the relationship that because He did what He did that now exists for us to access Him and overcome sin.

Now there is one thing that I want to pick up on. It is also in I Timothy. This relationship with Him is in one sense difficult for us to deal with because we never see Him. We are so dependent upon our eyes, so dependent upon our ears. We never see Him, we never hear Him, but He is there.

**I Timothy 6:13-16** [Paul writes] I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate [that brings His sacrifice in], that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

The apostle Paul says in one place that great is the mystery of godliness. There is no way that we puny humans are going to give full exposure to what we are attempting to comprehend just a very small portion of. So far, most of the descriptiveness has been of characteristics that we might literally physically see. But the author moves to the powers possessed and used by the Son in the performance of what He has within His responsibilities. And I believe that the only way we can most fully appreciate this is by understanding that all this massive power that Jesus Christ represents, existed, was crammed into Him even though born as a literal baby human being. Maybe this will help make Him a little bit more a little closer to you, to His greatness.

I want you to turn to the book of Luke, in chapter 1. It is just a little illustration of the power that resided in Jesus Christ even before He was born.

**Luke 1:39-45** Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the

mother of my Lord should come to me? [the baby was still *in* Mary] For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. [That is how much respect that God chose to show. That one in Mary's womb had the whole rest of the creation, as it were.] Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

Grasping this is demanding of our limited human imagination. I mean, how great Christ is! How can sin darken and corrupt humankind using only inborn human reason, come to comprehend and even lay hold on, believe, and love the truth that the awesome, great, omnipotent God should hide Himself in a frail human baby's life? We cannot.

But that Baby was concealing the One who grew to manhood and used a small amount of some of His awesome power to reveal Himself as the Creator God to some degree. He controlled the forces of nature when He commanded the roaring winds to cease and the waves to calm on the Sea of Galilee. He fed thousands of people at one time starting with a few loaves and fishes. He healed people from long distances without ever even seeing them. He raised a man from the dead. He became our Savior. He died for our sins. Nobody more important to life has ever walked on the face of the earth and God wants us to have a relationship with Him!

I mentioned something toward the end of my previous sermon that I need to correct and clarify. What I said was that the opening sentence of this first paragraph in Hebrews the first chapter can be translated as basically saying, "One age of time has ended and a new one has begun." Now, upon rereading what the commentator said, what I said was too-direct a statement. What the commentator said was that the *sense* (that is a key word) of the first paragraph can be *understood* (another key word) to say that "One age has ended and a new age has begun." And I believe that that is essentially correct.

It is hard to understand that we have a relationship with Jesus Christ who is our Creator and gave His life in the first place and that He is at the other end listening to what we say.

The keywords are "sense" and "understood." In other words, the commentator was saying that the first paragraph was a verbal bridge between the time of God's use of the prophets had ended and the times of the Son of God had begun. That is a more accurate statement, because you do not read of any prophets arising after Christ—not one. Why? You can tie a couple of things together. Because they are not needed. Jesus' Word is that authoritative and accurate. *Nothing* can be added to what He says that will in any way clarify the intent.

Recall that during the Transfiguration that both Moses and Elijah appeared and were clearly mentioned. But the voice the apostles heard said to them, "Hear the Son!" Moses and Elijah must have been the most respected of the prophets among the Jews. But God says, "Hear the Son!" In one sense, He is the only one you really need to listen to, basically.

Now in this opening chapter of the epistle the word prophet is only mentioned once and then the word prophet does not even appear until later in the book in chapter 3, I believe. Therefore we will do exactly what the author of the epistle did. He moved directly to comparing the righteous purity, qualifications, and authority of angels, who would certainly out-qualify and outrank a human prophet, to that of Jesus, who outranks and out-qualifies even them and everybody else except for the Father.

There is one other item that I want to explain more clearly now that I understand it a bit better myself. The central point is of the usage of the term Son in the opening here. Let us go back there again.

**Hebrews 1:1-2** God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom He made the worlds.

The central point of what I am getting at here is the usage of the term Son in verse 2, and I am going to combine it with the usage in John the first chapter, the opening description that is given there.



**John 1:18** No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

Do you know that Jesus is the only person who has ever lived who fulfilled verse 18? The last line is the one that is really important. "He has declared Him." Now, here I am a preacher. I am up here talking about God, I am declaring Him. No, not in the way that God meant. Here are a few statements as to why this is true only of Jesus the Son. Again, I am doing this so that I will help you to see this one personality's great importance to us.

Now, God did speak through prophets, but I am going to give things that disqualify them from having fulfilled what verse 18 says and what Hebrews chapter 1:2 says.

First: Through the ages, there were many prophets of varying qualities. Some of them were outright failures. Although they were prophets and they were used, they were not all the same quality. You are going to begin to see that nobody can match up to Jesus Christ in anything.

Second: The word of the Lord *came* to them, that is, to the prophet, it was given to them. They were not speaking their own words, it was given to them. In other words, they did not initiate the message because they did not literally possess it. And that is why it almost always says the prophet said what God told.

Third: They were all sinful men.

Fourth: The prophets did not understand the fullness of the very message given them.

Fifth: They did not understand the fullness of *all* of God's revelation.

Sixth: Every prophet, they, like John the Baptist, had to confess. They were only bearing witness to the light that God gave them.

Seventh: Only Jesus, catch this, had to do none of those things because He was already God. All those things are eliminated.

**Hebrews 1:2** has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things.

First of all, the statement "has in these last days" is a contrasting statement for the times in which it was written. It is not an absolute statement. In other words, he did not really mean, well this is the last days, but it was one of those things you get a *sense* for. He was saying one thing was ending and another thing was beginning. Now the use of that statement is to provide a separation from what God did in the past compared with what He did until Christ was born, and is doing now.

Here it comes, brethren. What is the difference? He spoke to the world, to mankind, in or by Son. Did you notice I did not say "His" Son? By Son. If you will notice in verse 2, that word 'His' is in italics. It was not in the original, it was added. *His* Son. Now, it should have been printed and understood without the addition of the "His." This sounds awkward to us but I am convinced that God wanted it without the pronoun. Think of it this way. The term "by" is also where a mistake is made. It should be translated "in" and that is an acceptable translation. It is a legitimate to be either "by" or "in."

Now, if I said to you, listen carefully, that Jesus went to a synagogue in Capernaum (recognize the name Capernaum, it could have been Jerusalem, it could have been any city in that area using this illustration). If I said that Jesus went to a synagogue in Capernaum and preached "in" Latin or Greek or any other language, it would sound smooth and be clearly understandable. Now, the truth in reality is that God did visit Capernaum and He spoke "Son." Follow me here: He spoke Son, just the way God intended that this verse read. He spoke Son.

What God wants to get across to us is, it is the *witness* of the Son God is emphasizing. Not that it was *His* Son, which it was, but He was emphasizing the witness made by Jesus. And this is why John 1:18 clearly states, "No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." How did the Son declare Him? By His words

and by His very active life. The Son born in Bethlehem was the same Person who had existed from all eternity. The Father and I are one, Jesus said, and thus the Father chose to communicate Himself by means of Son. Do you understand that?

He chose to communicate Himself, not in a different language, but rather "by Son." By means of His Son, not through a sinful prophet, not merely in Hebrew, not merely in Greek, not merely in English, or any other language, but Son.

So God chose to reveal Himself through the sinless witness of Son and everything that Son did was absolutely perfect. That is why prophets are not needed. We already have the perfect revelation of God and here it is. The Son's Word. He set a perfect example in every case.